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AUTHOR Shatto, Gloria
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ABSTRACT

The student work opportunity program at Berry College, Mount Berry, Georgia, which provides valuable learning experiences and helps students meet educational expenses, is described. More than 87 percent of the 1980-81 graduates worked in an on-campus job while attending college. The on-campus jobs also provide essential services for the college, including grounds and building maintenance, campus security, and office work. Normally students work from 10 to 20 hours per week during the school year, and during vacation they may work full-time. For some students, a 40-hour work week and one course per quarter are allowed. Another option is an assured 10-hour a week job for students living in a campus residence hall. Students demonstrating need may be eligible for work assignments, ranging from $300 to $1,200 a year, on the condition that the student match the amount through individual work earnings. The college offers the associate of science degree; bachelors degrees in the arts, fine arts, music, and sciences; and the masters of business administration and master of education degrees. (SW)

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BERRY COLLEGE'S STUDENT WORK OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM

Gloria Shatto

At Berry College, Mount Berry, Georgia, the student work opportunity program provides a valuable learning experience, helps students meet educational expenses and is an essential part of what Berry believes is a complete education. A student work program has been a vital part of Berry since its founding in 1902.

The college's philosophy is that perhaps the most important lessons in human relations are gained through working for and with other people...the actual experience of doing a job which means something to other people...the experience of being a necessary part of a work team...the experience of the work itself and the satisfactions which come from doing a job well. All of these are basic to what Berry believes is a good education.

At Berry, students learn something about the dignity of work. By becoming workers as well as scholars, they learn that both hard work and intellectual achievement can earn respect--that a laborer need not be considered "stupid" because of working with hands and muscles, and a scholar need not be considered "ineffectual" because of working primarily with brains.

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Student workers also learn practical lessons in paycheck economics in helping to work their way through college and meeting expenses. They develop self-reliance, a measure of independence and a sense of responsibility. They also gain skills and know-how which will be valuable in later careers and avocations.

The program of student work is a major means of helping to meet educational expenses and a significant educational opportunity in itself. Berry's budget for student work is more than $1.3 million for 1981-82.

Berry's distinctive work opportunity program is, in proportion to student enrollment, one of the largest in the nation. Participation is voluntary. But the vast majority of students want to work, and there is usually a waiting list of students seeking employment. More than 87% of the graduates during the 1980-81 academic year worked in an on-campus job during their career at Berry--and that doesn't include students who had off-campus jobs while completing their degree at Berry.

Berry does more than just "provide" jobs for students. The office of work opportunity and the supervisors throughout the various departments strive to make student work a meaningful

experience. Moreover, Berry relies upon the work that is accomplished by students. The jobs performed are important to Berry.

For Berry is like a "city" with many different departments, many different needs...ranging from maintenance of grounds to auto and truck repair...from maintaining the college's own electrical system and the water system from Berry's mountain reservoir to carpentry and building maintenance, including air conditioning...from welding to operating computers in the controller's office and various other departments...from working with campus security and in the dining halls...to holding down numerous secretarial and clerical positions.

New jobs are created each quarter; some old jobs are phased out as projects are completed and other needed work undertaken. Students may change from one job to another.

Work has been a tradition at Berry, and students who are graduated and go out into the job market soon find that prospective employers give an edge to Berry graduates. The practical work experience tips the scale on the job application form.

Most departments at Berry work full time to keep the physical plant and organization running. Normally students work from 10 to 20 hours each week. The fall break (five weeks) and particularly the three-month summer break (for those not in summer school) offer the possibility of full time work. During such periods students may work 40 hours a week.

For especially deserving students, the college has a program whereby a student may work full time during a regular quarter. The student may take one class during this period, if it does not interfere with working a full 40-hour week.

The college also has an assured work program. A student is assured at least 10 hours of work each week if he or she lives in a campus residence hall, accepts the job assigned and has the time in his or her schedule for the job.

In a unique program, students demonstrating need may be eligible for earned workships, ranging from $300 to $1,200 a year, on the condition that the student match the workship amount through individual work earnings--thus, totaling $600 to $2,400 for an academic year. At Berry a workship is as prestigious as a scholarship.

Berry offers the traditional arts and science courses and degrees. In addition, students can major or minor in areas including animal technology, business, computer science, education, home economics, industrial technology, interior design and 19 preprofessional programs.

The college offers associate of science, bachelor of arts, bachelor of fine arts, bachelor of music and bachelor of science plus master of business administration and master of education degrees. The coeducational enrollment is approximately 1,600, and approximately 1,000 students live in campus residence halls.

Finally, the college has always had a threefold purpose--academic achievement, student work opportunity and religion-in-life. There are regular interdenominational worship services in the campus chapels, and a resident chaplain serves as pastor to the campus community.

The campus is part of 28,000 acres owned by Berry, and the campus adjoins Rome, Georgia, which is approximately midway between Atlanta and Chattanooga (about 65 miles from each). The college's mailing address is Mount Berry, Georgia 30149.